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# **The New CPSU Program: Charting the Soviet Future**

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**An Intelligence Assessment**

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*SOV 86-10022  
April 1986*

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# **The New CPSU Program: Charting the Soviet Future**

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**An Intelligence Assessment**

This paper was prepared by [redacted] the  
Office of Soviet Analysis, with a contribution from  
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**The New CPSU Program:  
Charting the Soviet Future**

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**Key Judgments***Information available  
as of 1 April 1986  
was used in this report.*

The new CPSU program and statute, released in draft in fall 1985 and adopted in final form at the 27th Congress in March 1986, provide unique insights into the Gorbachev regime's vision of the future and its strategy for getting there. While offering few specifics, the program nonetheless establishes general boundaries for future policies; it effectively opens up new options to Gorbachev. Although often couched in vague terms, it is the party leadership's most comprehensive statement of its long-term objectives in key areas of domestic and foreign policy. The statute sets out the rules for the party's organization and operation that will define the levers of power available to Gorbachev.

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Compared with the 1961 document it replaces, the new program paints a more sober view of Soviet prospects for the future, both at home and abroad. It discards the 1961 program's predictions that the present generation would see the Soviet Union surpass the capitalist world's standard of living and witness major successes in the global advance of Communism.

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The program makes clear that new policies are needed to get the country moving again, but it does not provide a specific plan of action. Instead, it opens the door to a wide range of options by removing some ideological barriers to reform and by calling for a thorough reassessment of the policies inherited from the Brezhnev era. The program's general language on both domestic and foreign policy appears to have been crafted to give the regime flexibility as it hammers out more specific policies in the years ahead.

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The program presents an image of a party leadership that sees strengthening the country's economic base as an important factor in improving foreign policy prospects. It gives higher priority to domestic issues than did the 1961 program, and it suggests that Soviet influence abroad is directly dependent upon the country's economic strength and its ability to serve as an attractive model for developing countries. At the same time, the program provides no evidence of a retreat from current foreign commitments. It presents the achievement of strategic parity with the United States as a historic accomplishment on which there can be no compromise. It suggests that the Gorbachev regime sees negotiations with the United States as useful in consolidating this strategic position.

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**Comparison of Key Points in the 1961 and 1986  
CPSU Programs and Statutes**
**1961****Overall**

*States that Communism is the party's "immediate" goal, to be achieved by 1980.*

*Predicts that the USSR will surpass the United States in key economic indicators by 1970.*

*Discusses foreign policy before domestic policy.*

**Domestic Policy**

*Calls for elimination of the private sector in agriculture.*

*Calls for eliminating the role of commodity-money relations from the economy.*

*Limits tenure of all party officials (dropped after overthrow of Khrushchev).*

*Promises every family "comfortable" apartment by 1980.*

*Calls for the "withering away of the state."*

*Refers generally to the party's leadership of the military.*

**Foreign Policy**

*Says the capitalist world is undergoing serious crisis and is "ripe" for revolution.*

*Views the West as monolithic.*

*Calls for East European countries to have "uniform" political and economic systems.*

*Stresses importance of the Soviet experience.*

*Stress the "internationalist duty" to aid development in the Third World.*

**1986**

*States that Communism is the party's "ultimate" goal, to be achieved in the distant future.*

*Makes no specific economic comparisons with the United States.*

*Discusses domestic policy before foreign policy.*

*Sanctions a continued role for private agriculture. <sup>a</sup>*

*Calls for making "fuller" use of commodity-money relations, opening the door to expansion of the market.*

*No limit on tenure in office of party officials.*

*Promises "practically" every family an apartment by 2000.*

*Calls for "strengthening the state."*

*Specifically points out the party's leading role in formulating strategic and defense policy.*

*Recognizes that the capitalist world is still "strong."*

*Views the West as three competing centers of capitalism: the United States, Western Europe, and Japan.*

*Allows limited diversity in internal development of Bloc countries.*

*Stresses the importance of the experience of all socialist countries.*

*Stresses the need for development of Third World countries with limited financial support from the USSR.*

<sup>a</sup>Apparently controversial issues are not italicized.

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The program bears Gorbachev's unmistakable imprint, particularly on economic policy, but it also contains indications that he is running into conservative opposition on certain issues. In many parts of the program, different points of view appear to have been intentionally papered over with ambiguous language. The continued influence of conservative elements in the party is evident in the failure of the program and statute to reflect Gorbachev's views on several controversial issues, such as limiting the tenure in office of party officials and expanding public participation in decisionmaking. There are signs that "second" secretary Yegor Ligachev supported the conservative position on some of these issues. [ ]

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The 1981 decision to submit a new program to the 27th Congress forced Gorbachev to present the draft before he could fully develop his own blueprint for the future or force a resolution of some controversial issues. Because he was confronted with a largely finished document when he assumed power, his redrafting efforts appear to have been focused on softening language that could constrain his freedom of action. The program's broad formulations allow flexibility in interpretation and are therefore likely to spur intense debate over the future direction of Soviet policy, not end it. [ ]

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The opening created by the draft program was pushed further by Gorbachev at the 27th Congress. Although far-reaching proposals for revision, which were raised in a public debate of the draft, were not reflected in the final version, marginal changes seemed to make the program more to Gorbachev's liking. Gorbachev and his allies used their Congress speeches to widen the scope of discussion of possible reforms and to begin to lay out a few specifics. Many of the controversial issues the program raises will be resolved only in the years ahead as the new leadership thrashes out its response to the domestic and international challenges that were left unanswered by the Brezhnev regime. [ ]

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**Preface**

This assessment is based primarily on the CPSU program and statute and the 1961 documents they replace.

This paper draws on

remarks

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that Soviet officials made on the program, statute, and related issues. It assesses the new leadership's goals and strategy as they are reflected in the program and statute, but it is not intended to be a definitive assessment of the regime's foreign and domestic policies.

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## The New CPSU Program: Charting the Soviet Future

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The new Soviet party program, released in draft in October 1985 and approved in final form at the 27th CPSU Congress in March 1986, is the Gorbachev regime's most comprehensive and authoritative statement of overall goals and strategy. The language it enshrines as party doctrine is the result of long and often difficult negotiations and debate directly involving the top party leadership. [ ]

The need to revise and update the last party program, approved under Nikita Khrushchev in 1961, provided the impetus for the new draft. Khrushchev's projections of a life of abundance for the present generation of Soviet citizens and the rapid expansion of Communism throughout the world were soon recognized by his successors as unrealistic and naive. Although some of its assertions were repudiated at the 23rd CPSU Congress in 1966, it was allowed to sit on the shelf untouched until 1981, when Brezhnev told the 26th CPSU Congress that it should be revised to reflect current realities. In 1984 the Politburo decided to draft a new party statute in conjunction with the program revision. [ ]

This is only the third time since its founding in 1903 that the party has rewritten both of its fundamental guiding documents. Officially, the new program is a revision of the Khrushchev program (see inset, p. 2). In fact, however, it has been largely rewritten. While it retains the same ultimate goals of Soviet foreign and domestic policy—the worldwide victory of Communism and a life of material abundance for Soviet citizens—the program reflects a major rethinking of how and when they are to be achieved. [ ]

### Gorbachev's Imprint

Gorbachev apparently inherited a nearly completed draft from Chernenko's regime and had it rewritten to reflect his own agenda. In April 1984 Chernenko stated that "substantial work" had been done on the

revision, and, before his death in March 1985, US Embassy sources reported that a draft was nearing completion and would be released shortly. [ ]

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Once Gorbachev became party leader, however, the program's release was delayed:

- [ ] Gorbachev mandated changes in the finished draft of the program. 25X1  
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- The draft finally published on 24 October 1985 made evident that major last-minute changes were made to reflect the policies outlined by Gorbachev at the April Central Committee plenum and the June conference on science and technology.

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Gorbachev clearly won some key points during the redrafting process, but there is evidence that he had to compromise on some issues. The party's new guiding document often provides only a dim outline of future direction. This is reflected in:

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- Numerous internal inconsistencies (see sections on the political system and foreign policy) that suggest passages were inserted to please specific interest groups.
- A clear stand on some controversial issues, while sidestepping others that continue to be hotly debated.
- Prevalence of Gorbachev's views on many issues, but inconsistency with positions he has publicly taken on others.
- Difficulties in the drafting process that Gorbachev and "second" secretary Ligachev have publicly alluded to. [ ]

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**Party Programs**

*Since the founding of the party in 1903, its program has been the most fundamental statement of its policies. The program serves both propaganda and policy functions. As the leadership's vision of the future, it is intended to mobilize the rank and file and nonparty members in support of the party's goals. At the same time, it lays down boundaries governing practical policy decisions.*

**First Program, 1903**

**Objective:** *Overthrow of the Czar.*

**Result:** *Fulfilled by the 1917 October Revolution.*

**Second Program, 1919**

**Objective:** *Creation of a socialist society.*

**Result:** *Fulfilled when Stalin declared that the Soviet Union had reached the stage of socialism in 1936.*

**Third Program, 1961**

**Objectives:** *Greater per capita production than the United States by 1970.  
Creation of foundations of Communism by 1980 with abundance of material and cultural wealth for all.  
Workweek of 34 to 36 hours by 1970.  
"Comfortable" apartment for every family by 1980.*

**Result:** *Unfulfilled.*

**New Edition of Third Program, 1986**

**Objectives:** *Prepare the way for eventual transition to the abundance of Communism.  
Apartment for "practically every" family by 2000.  
Double national income by 2000.  
More than double labor productivity by 2000.*

While he may not have obtained all he wanted, Gorbachev further advanced his agenda at the 27th Congress:

- Changes in the final version of the program gave him additional leeway in the economic sphere.
- Building upon the openings created by the program, he and his supporters pressed for more specific measures in their Congress speeches.
- The 40-percent turnover in the Central Committee gave him a body to work with that is more favorable to change.

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**A Sober Document**

Viewed in the light of the document it replaces, the new program presents a sobering picture of Soviet reality. Khrushchev's 1961 program made wildly unrealistic projections of a life of abundance for the present generation of Soviet citizens and the rapid expansion of Communist influence throughout the world. Reflecting the economic downturn of the Brezhnev era and slower-than-expected progress on the international scene, the new program considerably scales back the 1961 goals and makes it clear that even these will be achieved only through a change in current policies. While continuing to promise a workers' paradise, it provides no timetable and acknowledges that major mistakes made by past leaders have retarded domestic development and reduced Soviet influence abroad. The program illustrates Gorbachev's intent to rectify these errors, but it is evident that the regime remains uncertain how to accomplish this goal.

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**A License for Change**

Although the program provides no clear blueprint for the future, it opens a wider range of options to the leadership by removing some important ideological constraints to fundamental policy changes (see inset, p. 4). It encourages innovation by characterizing "the creative development" of Marxism-Leninism as the party's "most important obligation." Using language

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**Drafting the New Party Program**

The task of revising the program was entrusted to a commission, headed by the General Secretary, that drew upon a wide range of expertise. The commission, formed under Brezhnev, was composed of the members of the Politburo and the Secretariat and about two dozen other Central Committee members, including:

Viktor Afanasyev	Editor of Pravda
Nikolay Baybakov	Head of Gosplan (1965-85)
Petr Fedoseyev	Vice President of the Academy of Sciences
Boris Gostev	First Deputy Chief of CPSU Economics Department (1983-85)
Richard Kosolapov	Editor of Kommunist (1976-86)
Georgiy Markov	Head of the USSR Union of Writers
Oleg Rakhmanin	First Deputy Chief of CPSU Bloc Relations Department
Stepan Shalayev	Soviet trade unions head
Boris Stukalin	Head of the CPSU Propaganda Department (1982-85)
Aleksandr Vlasov	First Secretary of Rostov (1984-86)
Vadim Zagladin	First Deputy Chief of the CPSU International Department

The commission set up working groups of specialists to provide input on specific topics; other specialists submitted written suggestions. Although only three commission meetings were publicly reported, Ligachev stated in a November 1985 Kommunist article that it had met on "numerous" occasions.

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The party leadership did not publicly turn its attention to the revision until after Brezhnev's death in November 1982:

- The first major discussion of the program was at the June 1983 plenum.
- The first reported meeting of the commission took place under Chernenko's chairmanship in April 1984.
- The Politburo discussed the program at an August 1984 meeting and decided to revise the party statute as well.

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Gorbachev first became publicly involved with the program on the eve of his election as General Secretary, when he discussed many of its provisions in the keynote address to a major party conference on ideology in December 1984. After becoming party leader, he was appointed head of the program commission and delivered the report on the program and statute to the October 1985 plenum, which approved the drafts.

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similar to that used by Gorbachev at an important December 1984 conference on ideology, it calls for "the rivalry of ideas and avenues of science, and fruitful debates and discussions."

The most fundamental ideological change in the program is a provision deferring Communism to the distant future. While the 1961 program described the achievement of Communism, a time of material abundance for all, as an "immediate" task that would be accomplished by 1980, the new program calls it only the "ultimate goal" of party policy.

This shift has important practical implications. Marxist-Leninist doctrine calls for elimination under Communism of private ownership of production, material differences among the population, and the market. By deferring the timing of the achievement of Communism, the new leadership's ability to explore such unorthodox economic options, which are actively promoted by some Soviet economists, is enhanced.

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**Ideology and Policy**

*Soviet policymakers, even Stalin, have always been careful to have their actions solidly grounded in party theory. Throughout Soviet history, fundamental changes in domestic and foreign policy have gone hand in hand with corresponding ideological adjustments:*

- *Stalin's thesis that class struggle does not diminish, but intensifies, under socialism paved the way for the purges that took place under the guise of rooting out class enemies.*
- *Khrushchev's thesis that the "dictatorship of the proletariat" had been replaced by a "state of the whole people" provided the theoretical justification for ending the repressive measures of the Stalin period.*
- *Brezhnev's rejection of Khrushchev's thesis that Communism would be achieved soon and substitution of the formula that socialism would last a long time helped to justify the regime's failure to provide promised consumer goods.* [redacted]

The new program further prepares the groundwork for innovation by adding language that will make it easier for the leadership to discard ineffective policies. It states that economic and societal problems, or "contradictions," must be carefully studied and "promptly" resolved. It characterizes measures to remove such contradictions as a necessary and positive force in domestic development. [redacted]

Such language is a partial victory for Soviet reformers. The 1980-81 Polish crisis sparked a sharp debate in the party, during which advocates of change warned of the danger of similar unrest in the Soviet Union unless the leadership addressed popular concerns and implemented domestic reforms. Specialists at the leading Soviet institute on Eastern Europe took the lead in advancing this view in the Soviet press. Their opponents, led by the recently ousted chief editor of *Kommunist*, Richard Kosolapov, argued that



Zhurnalists @

**Figure 1.** Richard Kosolapov,  
former chief editor of  
Kommunist [redacted]

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**Figure 2.** Mikhail Nenashev,  
head of State Publishing Com-  
mittee [redacted]

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Soviet society is too advanced for a Polish-type crisis and that fundamental policy changes are not needed.

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The program also suggests a new willingness to reassess past policies by its indirect, but unmistakable, criticism of Stalin, Khrushchev, and Brezhnev. Without naming them, it criticizes the "personality cult" (Stalin), "subjectivism and voluntarism" (Khrushchev), and failure to address growing economic problems (Brezhnev). Although such criticism of Brezhnev is in line with remarks made by Andropov and Gorbachev, it is still controversial; a letter published in *Izvestiya* during the debate over the draft suggested that this passage be dropped. [redacted]

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Figure 3. Khrushchev at 1961  
Party Congress



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### The Domestic Agenda

The Gorbachev program makes clear that revitalizing the domestic economy is the regime's top priority:

- The order of the foreign and domestic policy sections is reversed from that of 1961, with domestic policy now first.
- The domestic policy sections have undergone more fundamental revision than those on foreign policy.<sup>1</sup>
- The foreign policy section opens with the pronouncement that the main goal of the USSR in the international sphere is to "ensure favorable conditions" for domestic development.
- The revival of the Leninist formula that socialism will influence the world not through force of arms, but by force of example—an idea that fell into



disuse under Brezhnev—reflects an apparent appreciation that the Soviet Union will not be an attractive model as long as capitalist countries do a better job providing for their citizens' well-being.

### Economic Policy

Gorbachev was successful in getting his way on economic issues—the heart of the new program. These sections of the 1961 program have been completely rewritten and his imprint is clearly evident.

this part of the program received the most attention in the drafting process.

The only specific economic measures spelled out in the program were previously set out by Gorbachev in his speeches:

- Decentralizing economic management by increasing the financial autonomy of enterprises.
- Reorganizing the ministries to shift their roles toward long-term strategic planning and reducing their staffs.

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### Public Discussion of Program and Statute

*In the months between the release of the draft program and statute and their adoption at the 27th CPSU Congress, a broad public discussion of their contents took place at party meetings and in the Soviet press. A similar procedure was used to discuss the 1961 program and other major Soviet documents, such as the 1977 Constitution and recent five-year plans. The leadership uses such discussions to examine various policy options, to gauge public opinion, and to allow the population to let off steam. Only a few of the thousands of ideas aired during the public discussion were incorporated into the final versions of the program and statute adopted at the congress.*

*The public discussion provides a unique insight into the concerns of the Soviet population as well as policy options now under debate. Proposals with broader policy significance are discussed in the appropriate sections of this paper. Other ideas aired in the discussion include the following:*

- *A Soviet general's letter in the army paper Krasnaya Zvezda called for the addition of language to the program that would pledge to supply the armed*

*forces with "all the modern means necessary" for the USSR's defense.*

- *Numerous letters suggested changes in the statute that would make party members directly responsible for the actions of candidates they recommend for party membership.*
- *Various proposals were made to raise the age of admission for party members and to increase the accountability of party officials.*
- *A letter in Pravda, which was written by a member of a small national group, proposed abolishing nationality quotas at institutes of higher education and replacing the current system of republic passports with a single system for the entire country.*
- *A philologist proposed making Russian the official "second" language of all Soviet people.*
- *An article in Kommunist proposed that every family be guaranteed "comfortable housing" with more rooms than family members.*

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- Accelerating the introduction of advances in science and technology.
  - Increasing the role of machine building in revitalizing the economy.
  - Increasing reliance on "human factors"—more effective management, improved discipline, and reduced corruption—to boost production.

While the program makes a strong rhetorical commitment to the Soviet consumer, it is short on specifics; moreover, it:

- Qualifies the 1961 promise that Communism will "fully satisfy" the needs of the people to the more modest pledge to satisfy only "sensible needs."

- Says that "practically every" family will have a house or apartment by 2000. This is a step back from the 1961 program, which predicted that every family would have a "comfortable" apartment by 1980.

The program also unveiled the economic goals that were set out in greater detail in the draft five-year plan and guidelines to the year 2000 approved at the Congress. These extremely ambitious goals (see inset, page 2) were set at Gorbachev's personal urging—he stated in a speech in May 1985 that the growth rate of national income should be boosted from 3 percent to a

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minimum of 4 percent (the program set it at 4.7 percent). As a whole, economic goals are formulated in more general terms than in the 1961 program, and specific targets for sectors of the economy have been dropped. It is surprising that they are included in the program at all in view of the embarrassment caused by Khrushchev's unfulfilled goals and the criticism Soviet officials have directed at his program for setting specific targets. Their inclusion means that the program may again require revision at the end of this century. [ ]

The economic sections of the program provide few details on future policy that go beyond the agenda already set forth in public by Gorbachev, suggesting that long-term strategy is still being worked out and may yet be under dispute. The most significant development may be several doctrinal changes that will make it more difficult for conservatives to exploit the program as a barrier to economic reform. [ ]

**The Role of the Market.** The program opens the door to expanding the role of the market should the leadership decide to move in that direction. Indeed, Gorbachev's May 1985 speech in Leningrad suggests that he favors a policy of allowing greater private initiative in the service sector. The program calls for the economy to make "fuller" use of "commodity-money relations" and for a greater role for supply and demand and economic levers. In a December *Kommunist* article, a Soviet economist described this as the most important passage on domestic policy in the program. [ ]

The term "commodity-money relations" is vague and has been used by the Soviets to denote the use of economic levers such as prices, credit, profits, sales, and profitability to better implement central plans. Although some Soviet officials have stated in interviews with US officials that the formulation in the program foreshadows an expansion of the "market," it is not clear that they mean decentralized price setting and resource allocation based on supply and demand considerations. [ ]

The role of market forces in the Soviet economy is highly controversial, and any significant movement to rely on them is problematic. The widely divergent views espoused by Soviet officials on the proper role of the market indicate that no policy has yet been worked out. Kosolapov, for example, took a narrow approach, arguing that the market is not a "natural part" of the Soviet economy and that the expansion of commodity-money relations should not be viewed as a "panacea" for all disorders in the economy. [ ]

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The formulation in the program on commodity-money relations hews closely to Gorbachev's language at the December 1984 ideology conference, where he called for making "better" use of commodity-money relations and increasing reliance on economic levers such as "price, production costs, profit, and credit." Gorbachev's remarks were controversial, and other speakers at the conference argued for a more restrictive definition of the role of commodity-money relations in the economy. [ ]

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At the Congress there was additional support expressed for allowing market forces to play a larger role in the economy:

- One of the few changes made between the draft and the final version of the program broadened the scope of the discussion of commodity-money relations along the lines suggested in the public discussion by reform economist P. G. Bunich. While the draft program said that commodity-money relations should play a larger role in exchange aspects of the economy, the final version said they should play a larger role in exchange, production, and distribution.
- First Deputy Premier Vsevolod Murakhovskiy, a Gorbachev protege, broke a long taboo by directly calling for an expanded role for the "market" within the bounds of the socialist economy, assuring skeptics that "there is nothing to be afraid of."

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- Without using the word “market,” Gorbachev argued for measures that could, if liberally interpreted, allow market forces to play a larger role in the economy, criticizing those who view “any change” in the economic mechanism as departing from socialism. [ ]

Despite his rhetorical tilt toward the reformist view, Gorbachev has not challenged the legitimacy of centralized control over price setting and resource allocation. His focus on general themes, rather than specific measures that could galvanize opposition, may reflect an intent to encourage public debate on controversial issues until he has consolidated his political strength and has the necessary support to implement more far-reaching measures. Since the December conference, commodity-money relations have been the subject of continuing debate in the Soviet press. [ ]

**The Private Sector.** The program appears to give a strong guarantee that private agriculture will continue to play an important role in the Soviet economy. Changes in the program also undermine some arguments made by the conservatives against the private sector. The new program:

- Drops language that called, in the 1961 program, for the eventual elimination of private agriculture.
- Adds an implicit endorsement of private agriculture by crediting individual private plots with supplementing food resources.
- Gives a new, explicit guarantee of the continuing role for kolkhoz markets, where individuals can sell privately produced foodstuffs at prices determined by supply and demand.
- Leaves the door open to private enterprise by specifying only that the “basic means” of production must be socially owned—a qualification not in the 1961 program. [ ]

Soviet officials [ ]

[ ] even the advocates of the private sector, did not interpret these changes to mean there would be an expansion of private enterprise. They suggested, instead, that consumer services and other small businesses might be operated by cooperatives or small brigades in order to stimulate individual initiative, without expanding private ownership. Evidence of movement in that direction includes:

- An August 1985 *Izvestiya* article that described an experiment in Estonia, in which a group of workers repairs home television sets, working with space and equipment rented from a state enterprise, and then keeps part of the profits. The party program gives a strong endorsement to this type of economic activity, calling it an “effective means” of developing the economy.

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- Gorbachev’s suggestion at the Congress that improvements could be made in the service sector by making greater use of cooperative contracts between groups of individuals, including families, and enterprises. [ ]

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#### **Social Policy**

The program charts a relatively low-key, pragmatic course on social policy. Its avoidance of key issues suggests that the Gorbachev regime has not yet worked out its policies. Despite tentative signs of a thawing of cultural policy, this section of the program is lifted practically verbatim from the 1961 program, retaining the conservative stress on the need for *partiynost* (partymindedness). [ ]

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At the same time, the program shows greater deference to the persistence of societal groups’ differing interests than was evident in the 1961 program, and it is less optimistic about Soviet progress toward a homogeneous society:

- While continuing to urge assimilation, it is more flexible on nationality issues and shows greater toleration of cultural differences. It avoids calling for the “merging” of nations (a controversial term that came back into use under Andropov) and defers the “complete unity” of Soviet nations to the “remote historical future.”

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- Exhibiting a new sensitivity to workers’ attitudes, as a result of the 1980-81 Polish crisis, it calls for a more active role for trade unions in protecting workers’ rights than the 1961 program, which emphasized the unions’ role in boosting production.

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- Echoing a theme that has been publicly raised by Gorbachev, it places greater emphasis on the role of women than did the 1961 program, by calling for the party to "more actively nominate women for leadership work." At the Congress, Gorbachev set an example by adding Alexandra Biryukova to the Secretariat, making her the first woman in the leadership since the Khrushchev era.
- Reflecting the Soviet leadership's concern in recent years that the family be strengthened as a pillar of social stability, the program places greater emphasis on the importance of the nuclear family than did the 1961 program—which stressed the communal upbringing of children. The final version of the program added a new passage that states children should be responsible for the welfare of their parents during old age. [REDACTED]

#### The Political System

The program provides evidence of persisting differences within the regime over the desirability of opening up the system to broader participation by Soviet citizens. Gorbachev's public remarks at the December ideology conference suggest that he favored stronger language than was contained in the drafts of the program and statute. Small changes in the final version of the program go in the direction favored by Gorbachev. [REDACTED]

Reform-minded Soviet academics argue that expanding popular input into decisionmaking is necessary to overcome public apathy and to make economic reforms effective. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] Some of the specific measures [REDACTED] advocated include: giving workers expanded rights in running enterprises, such as electing managers; giving individual enterprises broad autonomy in decisionmaking; allowing local areas to decide issues by referendum; allowing greater freedom in public discussions; making information on sensitive issues more available; and making the party and state election processes more

responsive to the electorate. Opponents, like Kosolapov, fear that such changes could get out of hand and undermine political stability. Pointing to the examples of Hungary in 1956, Czechoslovakia in 1968, and Poland in 1980-81, Kosolapov and other conservatives have argued instead for strengthening state control.

[REDACTED] This disagreement surfaced during the drafting of the program:

- In October 1984 Kosolapov stated that disagreements in the commission over this issue had brought its work "to a stop."
- There are inconsistencies in the program's treatment of this subject: the program's theoretical formulations appear to discourage expanding public participation, but several recommendations do encourage it.

Even in 1961, the sharpest differences aired in public by the leadership were over this issue, and debate over it has persisted in the Soviet press. [REDACTED]

The program makes a nod toward expanding public participation by calling for a larger role for local soviets (governing councils), broadening public discussion of issues, urging a more open information policy, and holding national referendums on major issues. It does not, however, contain most of the far-reaching measures advocated by reformers. Conservatives, moreover, appear to have scored because language calling for the "withering away of the state" was removed, and it was replaced with a call for "strengthening" state institutions. Apparently in support of this view:

- Kosolapov, in an October 1984 interview, criticized theories of the decline of the state as "utopian," and, using language almost identical to that in the new program, stated that, although the state will become "apolitical," the need for a "scientific, conscious center of management" would continue to exist.

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- Ligachev, in a November *Kommunist* article, argued that self-government can be achieved only through the state, thus rejecting in stronger language than was used in the program the idea that the state will give up power to organs of self-government. [ ]

Gorbachev might have preferred a stronger endorsement of expanding public participation in the program:

- At the December 1984 ideology conference, he criticized unnamed officials for arguing that practical measures expanding public participation should be put off until the distant future.
- At the October plenum, where the draft was approved, he called for expanding political participation in stronger terms than the program did.
- Since he became party leader, top government officials have begun to be exposed to public scrutiny on live television programs where they answer questions phoned in by citizens. [ ]

Changes in the final version of the program reflect ideas advocated by Gorbachev in calling for workers to play a larger role in management:

- A passage stating that workers' organizations should have increased rights in managing all aspects of production was added.
- A passage stating that workers should elect lower level managers was also added. This controversial formulation was specifically endorsed by the Congress. Kosolapov stated that this change had been previously considered by the drafting commission but apparently rejected. [ ]

**Revitalizing the Party.** Changes in the party statute—approved at the Congress along with the program—appear to be aimed at restoring the credibility of the party leadership (see inset). Soviet historian Roy Medvedev, [ ] claims that the changes in the statute are of greater political consequence than those in the program. The major changes include:

- Party members are given expanded rights of criticism. Under the new provisions, they would be able to criticize any party organization, even those to which they do not belong.

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### *The CPSU Statute*

*The statute is the party's basic document that outlines its organizational structure and operating procedures. Since the first statute was adopted in 1903, it has been revised 16 times. The rules previously in force were adopted with the party program in 1961, but they were amended at the 23rd Congress in 1966 and the 24th Congress in 1971. A decision to revise the statute in conjunction with the program was taken at an August 1984 Politburo meeting, and a commission was appointed to oversee the process.*

- Party members' immunity before the law is eliminated; a new provision holds them responsible for criminal charges before the party and the judicial system. According to Medvedev, party members formerly could not face criminal charges unless they were first expelled from the party.

- The central party leadership apparently has greater leeway in overseeing the work of party and government organizations.

- Stronger language was added that calls for public reporting on internal party business and encourages more open discussion at party meetings. [ ]

Gorbachev may have run into resistance in an effort to include more radical measures in the statute to facilitate the replacement of ineffective leaders and prevent the formation of local party fiefdoms that occurred under Brezhnev. Medvedev maintains that Gorbachev initially sought provisions to limit the tenure of party officials, but that he backed off because of the strength of the opposition. The statute contains only a vague reference to the need for "systematic renewal" of cadres. Tough provisions in the 1961 statute limiting terms of office of all party officials, including the Politburo, were strongly opposed by the party rank and file and rescinded at the 23rd Congress, following Khrushchev's ouster. [ ]

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An unsuccessful effort was mounted to have such provisions added to the statute before it was adopted at the 27th Congress. Proposals to strictly limit tenure in office were prominently featured in the officially sanctioned "debate" of the draft statute. Three successive issues of the leading party journal *Kommunist* carried letters as part of the debate:

- Many suggested limiting the tenure of party officials to two or three consecutive terms.
- One said that the decision of the 23rd Congress on this subject needs to be reconsidered.
- Another called for placing age limits on party officials. [ ]

The discussion of the statute also revealed pressure for changes in party voting procedures that would have made it easier for the rank and file to hold leaders to account:

- A letter in a major Soviet daily claimed that secret voting is now a sham because party members must cross names off a list in public view to vote against a candidate. As a result, "far from everyone" who would like to cast a negative vote does. This letter called for new procedures to make voting more secret, such as requiring that ballots be marked in a booth.
- A letter in *Kommunist* went further. It suggested that multiple candidates run for party posts and that winners be decided by secret ballot. [ ]

On the eve of the Congress, the public discussion of the statute began to touch on highly sensitive issues. The discussion culminated in the publication of a roundup of letters in the 13 February *Pravda*. They made the following points:

- Below the level of the Central Committee, a "slow-moving, inert, flabby" stratum of administrators is unenthusiastic about "radical change" and only expects privileges.
- All special stores and privileges enjoyed by the party elite should be eliminated.
- A "thorough purge" of the party apparatus is needed. [ ]

It soon became evident that these issues divide the party leadership. In a highly unusual move, which Embassy contacts claim was at the initiative of Ligachev, *Pravda* published a rebuttal to one of these letters only two days later. A response usually takes weeks. These issues again surfaced at the party Congress:

- Although reported by a well-placed Embassy contact to have approved publication of the 13 February *Pravda* article, Gorbachev, in his opening speech, offered assurances that there was no need for a "purge."
- A Gorbachev protege specifically criticized one of the letters in *Pravda*, and Ligachev criticized the newspaper in more general terms.
- In contrast, Moscow party boss Boris Yeltsin appeared to endorse the *Pravda* article by calling for an end to special privileges for the elite and denouncing "the inert layer of timeservers" in the party. [ ]

There is additional evidence that Ligachev is trying to restrain pressures for far-reaching reforms of the party. He supported elimination of the requirement that officials be elected by secret ballot in the smallest party organizations in his November *Kommunist* article and suggested that this should also be done in larger party organizations. These provisions in the statute were not changed in the final version. [ ]

#### Defense Policy

While both the 1961 and the 1986 programs stress the party's leadership of the military, the new program places additional emphasis on the party's role in formulating military doctrine and strategic and defense policies. A passage has been added that specifically points to this leading role. [ ]

This shift may be intended to define civilian influence in areas where military questions have taken on increased political significance. One Central Committee member explained the change to a US official by pointing out that advances in weaponry over the past 25 years have made military doctrine less a question of military maneuvers and expertise and more one of foreign policy and politics. [ ]

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There is also some tentative evidence that civilians are playing a larger role in shaping national security doctrine:

- Civilian specialists have been playing a more prominent role in articulating Soviet strategic policy for foreign audiences.
- According to US Embassy sources, Gorbachev plans to create a staff headed by a civilian to advise him on national security matters. [ ]

Changes in doctrinal formulations in the new program also suggest that the emphasis on party direction of defense policy reflects the leadership's increased sensitivity to the foreign policy implications of military doctrine. Portions of the program essentially emphasize positions that were first articulated by Brezhnev in a landmark speech at Tula in January 1977. The 1986 program:

- Presents the achievement of "strategic parity" with the United States as a "historic" accomplishment that must be preserved.
- Is less hostile than the 1961 program, stating that there will be "neither victors nor vanquished" in a nuclear war. The 1961 program bluntly stated that, in a world war, imperialism would be "buried."
- Reaffirms the idea, introduced into Soviet military doctrine by Khrushchev, that nuclear war is not inevitable. [ ]

### Foreign Policy

The 1986 program's scaled-down expectations for the international scene further indicate the Gorbachev regime's focus is on its domestic agenda. The program is more cautious about the advance of Communism, and more respectful of the strength of the capitalist world, than the 1961 document. At the same time, the program contains no hint that the Soviet Union will pull back from its international commitments. In a speech to the Turkmen Republic Congress, First Deputy Chief of the CPSU International Department Zagladin directly linked domestic economic strength to Moscow's success in managing relations with the United States. He claimed that one of the reasons for the failure of detente in the late 1970s was that domestic economic difficulties created an impression of Soviet weakness in the West. [ ]

The international affairs sections of the program, like the domestic portions, show the effects of an attempt to balance divergent views. The program opens with an indictment of "imperialism" and an orthodox Leninist interpretation of international developments that should please party conservatives. Later sections, in contrast, spell out current policies in practical terms that are devoid of harsh rhetoric. [ ]

As a whole, the foreign policy sections of the program are considerably less detailed than those of 1961. As in domestic affairs, the Gorbachev regime appears to be keeping its options open. [ ]

### East-West Relations

The program reflects the growing role of arms control and trade in the Soviet view of the East-West relationship. While it emphasizes the importance of relations with the United States, it appears to be more optimistic about the prospects for improving ties to Western Europe. Specifically, the language in the new program is supportive of Gorbachev's efforts to re-engage the West in direct diplomacy, and it bears little trace of the confrontational rhetoric that Andropov was proposing only three years ago. (In his speech to the June 1983 party plenum, for example, Andropov said that the program should contain language reflecting the "unprecedented sharpening of the struggle between the two world systems.") [ ]

In contrast, the program avoids harsh rhetoric and focuses instead on resolving specific bilateral issues:

- Arms control is given high priority. Compared with the general formulations contained in most of the program, Soviet negotiating positions are spelled out.
- An expansion of East-West trade is endorsed. At the same time, the program reflects the impact of US embargoes and international economic instability over the last decade, by calling for steps to make the Soviet economy independent from the West in "strategically important" areas and immune from the effects of crises. [ ]

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The program endorses the expanded efforts Moscow has been devoting to using public opinion and political movements in the West as a means of influencing Western governments. It contains a new recognition that "mass democratic movements" are an important "progressive" force in capitalist countries. [redacted]

The relatively sober attitude toward competition with the West is evidently based on a new appreciation of the strength of the capitalist system. The program discards the 1961 assertion that the West is nearing collapse and concludes that capitalism is still "strong and dangerous." The 1961 program contained a detailed exegesis of the decline of capitalism, describing it as a "rotting and dying" system "ripe" for revolution, and calling this the "age of the downfall of imperialism." The new program drops much of this language and merely says that the crisis of capitalism is "deepening" and that it is a system that is "historically doomed." [redacted]

This change in attitude appears to be controversial. Vadim Zagladin, First Deputy Chief of the CPSU International Department, complained in a 1984 article that "some Marxist scientists" incorrectly argue that the crisis of capitalism has entered a more acute stage. A *Kommunist* editorial, published after the draft program was released, described the crisis of capitalism in more dire terms than did the program. [redacted]

The program leaves no doubt that Soviet diplomacy will increasingly feature differentiated policies toward the Western powers. It underscores the multipolarity of the West by introducing a new formulation, cited by Gorbachev in his report to the Congress, that refers to three main competing centers of capitalism: the United States, Western Europe, and Japan. It also predicts that new centers of economic and political rivalry will develop in the Pacific and in Latin America. [redacted]

The importance of the United States to Soviet foreign policy is nevertheless underscored in the program. Although it does not recite policy toward any other country specifically, it discusses relations with the

United States in detail—calling for "normal, stable relations" and pointing out that "differences of social systems are not a reason for tense relations." Prospects for relations with Western Europe, however, are stated in more positive terms, calling for "peaceful, good-neighborly relations." [redacted]

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#### Soviet Bloc

The program, like the Congress itself, sends no clear signal regarding Gorbachev's intentions toward Eastern Europe. While the program accepts some diversity in domestic policies, it emphasizes the need for Bloc unity on foreign policy matters. The program's flexible approach to internal matters could ease the way for Soviet experimentation with economic reforms that have been tried out in Eastern Europe. [redacted]

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The new program gives Bloc countries greater leeway in their internal policies than did the Khrushchev program. In his June 1983 speech on the program, Andropov said that, since the 1961 program, the Soviet leadership has recognized that the internal development of socialist countries would not be as "uniform" as once thought but is more "diverse and complex." The new program places less emphasis on the relevance of the Soviet model for other socialist countries and reiterates the legitimacy of various paths to socialism, which are adapted to the "specific conditions of each country." [redacted]

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The program places greater emphasis on Bloc conformity in foreign policy matters. While it stresses the need for coordinated policies in the international arena, it stops short of endorsing the view of hard-liners, who rule out any independent actions, by:

- Calling for "increasingly effective collaboration" on foreign policy matters and a "further deepening" of Bloc economic cooperation.
- Stating that coordination in the international arena must take account of both the "situation and interests" of each Bloc member and the "common interests" of the community as a whole.

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- Softening the position taken in a hardline article, that appeared in the June 1985 *Pravda* and was reportedly written by Rakhmanin, First Deputy Chief of the CPSU Bloc Relations Department. The article stated that small countries cannot play an independent role in East-West relations, but the program proposes that large and small states "regardless of their potential or geographic location" have a role to play in solving acute problems and curbing the arms race. [redacted]

During the drafting of the program, controversy occurred within the Soviet establishment over the acceptable limits of diversity in the internal and foreign policies of the Soviet Bloc countries:

- Rakhmanin's *Pravda* article left practically no room for diversity in internal policy. It lashed out strongly at unspecified economic reforms that would weaken centralized control or expand the private sector. In uncompromising terms, it attacked East European aspirations for greater independence in foreign policy, by criticizing "nationalist tendencies" and the position advanced by Hungary and East Germany that "small states" can act as mediators between East and West.
- After this blast, however, other articles by well-placed Soviet officials took a more flexible line on diversity within the Bloc.
- In September a [redacted] journalist claimed that Gorbachev's dissatisfaction with the program's treatment of Bloc relations was delaying the publication of the program.
- Roy Medvedev claims that Gorbachev and Ligachev did not see eye to eye over this section of the program. [redacted]

The controversy over diversity within the Bloc apparently is still going on. The draft program deleted a rigid 1961 line that stated that socialist countries must have a "uniform state structure" marked by "social-economic and political uniformity." However, a toned-down version of that line was inserted in the final program, and it called for Bloc countries to have a "single type" of economic, political, and social system. This was balanced by a new passage calling for a "well-intentioned comparison of viewpoints" within the Bloc. [redacted]

#### International Communism

The program gives Moscow a theoretical framework for dealing with ruling Communist parties (for example, China or Yugoslavia) that are not part of the Soviet Bloc, which the previous program lacked. The 1961 program took a narrow view of the world socialist system, which implicitly required recognition of Moscow's supremacy, and left no room for ruling parties to take an independent path. In contrast, the new program distinguishes between the smaller "socialist community" (Soviet Bloc countries belonging to CEMA and the Warsaw Pact) and the broader "socialist system" (all Communist countries). [redacted]

The new program also takes a less doctrinaire and more pragmatic approach toward nonruling Communist parties. It states that the party in each country should "autonomously" determine its own strategic course and adds that "differences" over specific issues should not stand in the way of cooperation. This tolerant stance was reinforced in the final version of the program, which dropped a passage criticizing divergent views in the World Communist Movement that was contained in the draft program. [redacted]

The new program adopts a far less optimistic view of the prospects for the "International Workers Movement," noting the "complex" problems that it faces, rather than the "favorable" situation described in the 1961 program. In what may be an effort to seek a common denominator to unite disparate parties, the program eschews calling for support of specific Soviet policies; instead it promotes common general goals, such as preventing world war and abolishing "vestiges of colonialism." [redacted]

#### The Third World

The new program is far less sanguine about short-term prospects for Soviet successes in the Third World. While underscoring Moscow's commitment to consolidating its position in the Third World, it accords the Third World less attention than did the 1961 program. In contrast, the Khrushchev program, written when decolonization was widespread, exuded confidence that the anticolonial posture of the newly independent states would bolster the USSR in its global competition with Washington. [redacted]

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The new program also suggests the leadership's new sensitivity to the limits of Soviet largess in abetting "socialist transformation" in the Third World. While expressing "profound sympathy" for Third World nations, the program asserts that they will have to create the material and technical base of a socialist society "mainly through their own effort." Moscow, the program states, will give aid "to the extent of its abilities." In contrast, in his discussion of the program at the 1961 congress, Khrushchev interpreted the program's statement of the party's "internationalist duty" to mean that the Soviet Union would actively assist in the development of major economic projects in the Third World. [ ]

The program's stance on the Third World reflects a reexamination by Soviet officials and specialists of the pace of social change in the Third World and the effectiveness of Soviet assistance in winning reliable allies. In the late 1970s, Soviet academics began to write that the trend toward socialism in the Third World was slowing. They now argue that Third World countries are unlikely to follow the socialist path unless the Soviet Union can become a more attractive model. The language used in the Third World section reflects a shift in official thinking that Andropov first outlined in his speech on the program to the June 1983 plenum, when he said that the Soviet Union would give economic assistance to developing countries to the "extent" of its ability. [ ]

### Political Implications

Although Gorbachev's imprint on the program and statute is clear, the political compromises and unsettled questions evident in these documents suggest that his regime has not yet resolved some fundamental policy issues. Gorbachev's emphasis so far has been on making the existing system work better. The program adds to other indications, however, that the new leadership may be open to more substantial measures over the long term, should its ambitious goals require them. Indeed, well-placed Soviet economists have told Embassy officials that far-reaching economic reforms are being drawn up for possible introduction within two or three years. [ ]

The discussion surrounding the program suggests that the draft papers over two different philosophical approaches within the party to solving the problems facing the Soviet Union. Without challenging the basic assumptions on which the Communist system is based, Gorbachev appears to be willing to consider a broad range of political and economic options to strengthen the Soviet state. He seems to be meeting resistance from powerful conservative forces in the party, who oppose major innovations on ideological grounds, apparently because they fear that reforms could upset a delicate balance that allows the regime to maintain control. Their spokesmen, such as Kosolapov, argue that any significant relaxation of central control runs the risk of unleashing an uncontrollable process that could undermine the foundations of the system. They point to the recent crisis in Poland and past upheavals in Czechoslovakia and Hungary to make their case. [ ]

Given the cautious nature of the Soviet political leadership for the past 20 years, healthy skepticism is likely to remain among the party rank and file about the need for any far-reaching changes. Most party officials who are gaining positions of influence spent their formative years in an environment that rewarded conservatism and caution, not bold innovation. As Gorbachev's housecleaning progresses, it is becoming evident that the conservatives' political base extends well beyond the diminishing circle of Brezhnev holdovers:

- Many of their leading spokesmen are not members of the old guard but men of the same generation as Gorbachev. Kosolapov, for example, is only a year younger than Gorbachev, and a *Pravda* staffer who authored a recent series of articles staunchly defending the conservative line is even younger.
- Their continued political vitality was evident in the early February reelection of Ukrainian party chief Vladimir Shcherbitskiy and Kazakh party leader Dinmukhamed Kunayev. Shcherbitskiy is the most outspoken conservative in the Politburo; Kunayev is an old Brezhnev crony. In recent months, various Embassy contacts have said that Gorbachev wanted to remove both leaders.

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***Changes in the 1986 CPSU Program and Statute  
Endorsed by the Party Congress***

*The final versions of the program and statute approved by the 27th Congress reflect only marginal changes from the original drafts. Following the pattern of previous public discussions of major Soviet documents, the Congress rejected radical ideas and approved only a handful of the thousands of specific proposals for changes aired during the public discussion. The significant alterations include:*

- *Addition of a passage calling for workers to have an expanded role in "all" aspects of running enterprises, including the election of lower level managers.*
- *Broadening of the definition of commodity-money relations, and addition of a passage on the importance of monetary factors in the economy, which reflected increased interest in the discussion of economic reforms that make greater use of market forces in regulating the economy.*
- *Increased emphasis on material incentives, suggested by referring to them ahead of moral incentives, reversing the order from the draft program.*
- *Addition of passages that refer to the antialcohol campaign, which was not mentioned in the initial drafts.*
- *Deletion of the innovative term "whole socialism" and addition of references to the more conventional concept of "developed socialism." These changes were made apparently to overcome confusion over the defining of the current stage of Soviet development.*
- *Addition of a passage that stipulates the responsibility of children to care for their aged parents.*
- *Addition of a passage stating that Bloc countries should have a "single type" of social, economic, and political system. This was balanced by a new call for a "well-intentioned comparison of viewpoints" within the Bloc. Reflecting an ongoing debate over Soviet policy toward Eastern Europe, there was more tinkering with this section than with any other on foreign policy.*
- *Deletion of a passage criticizing "opportunism and reformism, dogmatism, and sectarianism" (charges sometimes made against nonruling Communist parties). This change was made in a show of toleration of divergent views within the International Communist Movement.*

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- They have produced a steady stream of press articles that continue to challenge reforms Gorbachev appears to favor.

At the 27th Congress, Gorbachev tilted the party's center of gravity away from conservatism toward change. The most significant revisions in the final version of the program appeared to further advance his agenda (see inset). They broadened the boundaries for discussion of economic reform and provided the

basis for more specific proposals that are now beginning to emerge. Kosolapov's failure to win reelection to the Central Committee—and his removal as editor of *Kommunist* on the eve of the Congress—was a clear signal of declining conservative influence. Despite these victories, it was evident at the Congress that Gorbachev's agenda continues to be slowed by ideological and bureaucratic resistance.

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Figure 4. Gorbachev voting at 27th Party Congress [redacted]

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Tentative signs have appeared that "second" secretary Ligachev may be drawing on these conservative forces within the party to bolster his own position. Although he is clearly a political ally of Gorbachev, the public debates over the program and statute and his speech at the Congress suggest that he took a more cautious position on several issues. Roy Medvedev [redacted]

[redacted] claimed, moreover, that Ligachev took a more conservative position during the internal party discussions. On several points, Ligachev's view appears to have prevailed. Such posturing in inner party circles could be an effective strategy for building an independent political base and could set the stage for major battles in the years ahead. [redacted]

Despite the continued influence of entrenched conservatism, Gorbachev's demonstrated willingness to move aggressively to build his power and get his program under way suggest that the prospects for bold initiatives should not be underestimated:

- Key changes in the program appear to undermine conservative arguments against reform, and they put the party squarely on record as seeking new solutions to chronic problems.
- Most major policy shifts in Russian and Soviet history have not reflected the prevailing views of the political elite; instead, change has been initiated by a strong and determined leader. Gorbachev seems to be the kind of leader who could take such initiative, if he concludes that he can make a good case for more radical measures and that he can overcome resistance. [redacted]

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